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LAMBDA



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Photo by Candace Jazvac

Thousands take to the streets in Sudbury to support USW 6500

Candace Jazvac
 Assistant Editor

With speakers from all over the world, and busloads of activists from all over the province, the United Steelworkers showed a strong presence of over 4000 people as they cheered and chanted on Monday March 22. Starting at the union hall on Brady Street, the group made their way to the Sudbury Arena for over two hours of speeches and song, followed by a complimentary barbecue for participants and their families.

The 'Bridging the Gap' rally was originally going to include a walk across the Paris Street bridge. Both the City of Greater Sudbury Police, and mayor John Rodriguez had previously supported this course of action, however following some concerns about the inconvenience to drivers, and the possible hindrance to emergency vehicles, the rally was quickly re-routed to only effect Brady Street. Furthermore, attendees of the rally were instructed by USW 6500 to only use the bridge to get to the rally itself, and to not attempt to stop traffic in any way.

A group of students from Laurentian University chose to take advantage of their walk to the rally to send a clear message about the "unfair and unnecessary change". About 20 students marched from St. Joseph's hospital, along Paris Street,

and across the bridge, holding signs showing their discontentment with the rally's forced change of location.

Carrying signs and banners with slogans such as "Our community, our bridge, our rally"

have fought for fair student wages for summer jobs with Vale, the least we can do is show our support for their fight for the continued good of our community," says Fuhringer.

Also, Fuhringer stressed

but we are certainly allowed to cross it with our signs to show the hypocrisy of this whole ordeal."

Eventually, the group reached the United Steelworkers union hall on Brady Street, and joined the rest of the massive crowd for the march to the Sudbury Arena. Supporters of all ages chanted and cheered as they made their way along Brady Street, clutching a variety of homemade signs and donning their USW gear, which was being sold at the union hall, with all money going to the Strike fund.

Once inside the arena, the excitement only continued to build. Speakers from countries all over the world, including Brazil, addressed the crowd, receiving one standing ovation after another. From union leaders like Leo Gerard, to leader of the New Democratic Party of Canada, Jack Layton, the message was clear, "You picked the wrong town, you picked the wrong union!"

At the end of the evening, as the arena began to empty out with participants returning to the union hall for the long-awaited barbecue, one final rendition of the classic union song 'Solidarity forever' filled the room. Steelworkers and supporters alike sang along, shook the hands of their brothers and sisters, and smiled as they made their way back to Brady Street for another evening of sharing memories, stories, and plans for rallies yet to come.



LU students walk the bridge in support of USW

and "This bridge can hold 100 cars, but it can't hold one rally?" the students slowly made the way across the bridge, stopping on the sidewalk to wave and cheer for honks of support from passers-by. Candace Fuhringer, one of the lead organizers of the group, made it clear how important it was for Laurentian students to come out to the event. "We support our fellow community members. The United Steelworkers

the need for the community to recognize that the sudden concern about closing the Paris Street bridge for such a rally was unnecessary, saying "It is unjust to allow the closure of this bridge for corporate Olympics, the Santa Claus parade, and months of construction, but to forbid it's closure for a strike that effects our community. The Steelworkers were not allowed to hold a peaceful rally on this bridge,

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Include your full name and student number. Please keep articles to a maximum of 700 words. Lambda reserves the right to edit for content considered sexist, racist, homophobic, heterosexist, for length, or legal purposes. Letters of a harassing or slanderous nature will be dealt with by proper authorities.

Need advice: ask Kayla



Kayla Thomas
Contributor

Dear Kayla:

I was hoping to get a girl's opinion on this. As much as I want it, my girlfriend won't be affectionate towards me. No kissing, no cuddling, NOTHING! What am I doing wrong and how can I get her to even show me a little affection?

Thank you,
Energizer Bunny

Hello Energizer Bunny,

Well assuming that you and your girlfriend are not broken up and are completely happy otherwise, there must be something going on in her life that makes her feel uncomfortable to the point where she does not want to be touched. I suggest you talk to her, find out what is going on and how you can help her. Also if she is adamant about not being touched, you definitely should not continue to ask her or try to persuade her to be more affectionate; that will only push her away even more. Just know that she probably really cares about you, but right now she is not emotionally capable of showing it.

Hope this helps!
Kayla

Hey Kayla,

I do not know how else to say this, but I am FREAKING OUT over the upcoming exams. I know I'm going to fail, but I don't want to. It's like I freeze when I do them or something. As the exam date approaches, I just feel so anxious that I can't seem to study until like the night before or even the day of, what should I do?

Sincerely,
A Ticking Time Bomb

Hi Ticking Time Bomb:

I think the first thing you need to do is calm down. Anxiety is caused by how you perceive a situation. So if you keep thinking that you are going to bomb the exams or you'll "freeze", and then of course you will experience these negative feelings. I think rather than waiting until the last minute to study, you should start studying now. Break up your notes into small sections, and cover one section per day. This is how I study for exams, but each day I'll reread the section that I covered from the previous day. For example, if one day I studied chapter 1 of my notes and the next day I'm going to study chapter 2, I will reread chapter 1 briefly before I start studying chapter 2. I really hope this helps and good luck on your exams!

Best regards,
Kayla

Need advice?

Email Kayla!

Send your questions to

kx1_thomas@laurentian.ca

SGA Election results

The polls have closed, and the results are in!

For President: Samantha Pitzel

Yes: 771

No: 67

For VP Student Issues: Casey Lalonde

Yes: 731

No: 95

For VP Student Services

Colleen Keaney: 442

Jackie Miller: 393

For Senator: Zach Courtemanche

Yes: 754

No: 89

For International Students Commissioner: Efe Gercek

Yes: 766

No: 59

Referendum results

Varsity increase

Yes: 442

No: 462

Health, Dental coverage

Yes: 640

No: 253

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Current wage rate	\$9.50/hour	\$8.90/hour	\$8.25/hour	\$47.50	\$95.00	110% of the minimum wage
Mar. 31, 2010 wage rate	\$10.25/hour	\$9.60/hour	\$8.90/hour	\$51.25	\$102.50	110% of the minimum wage

On March 31, 2010, the general minimum wage will increase to \$10.25 per hour from the current rate of \$9.50 per hour.

To find out more about how the new minimum wage guidelines affect employers and employees, call or visit the Ministry of Labour web site.

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Sustainable Earth Club: Tips for saving water



Kayla Cornthwaite
Contributor

Fact: Statistics Canada has indicated that according to research done by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development in 1999, each Canadian on average used 1,471 cubic metres of water. Eleven years later, just imagine how much that number has increased. Considering only 3% of the Earth's water is freshwater, this is concerning. This is also why it is so important for us to protect this very critical resource.

What you can do: There are a multitude of things you can do to help conserve water. A few ideas might be; take shorter

showers- try to keep them under 10 minutes, when you turn on a water faucet use the lowest pressure necessary, only run full loads of dishes and laundry- and keep the water temperatures as low as possible. And last but not least, when it's yellow let it mellow and when it's brown flush it down!

Newspaper Creativity:

With gardening season fast approaching, a good way for you to reuse your newspaper is to use it as garden mulch. There are two ways to do this:

1. to deter weed growth and retain moisture, layer 5-6 wet sheets under the soil
2. to use as an edible bedding for worms, simply do the same but with shredded paper.

Rules of the Game: Self limiting beliefs and overcoming them

Ace Kirkwood
Contributor

Anyone have a self limiting belief?

I hear them all the time. I even used to have a few myself.

The most common ones I hear are people complaining that pickup lines won't work for them because they are not good looking, short, too old, too young, have no money, too inexperienced with girls, etc.

Guys and girls who have these insecurities have a very hard time leaving them behind.

While some of these beliefs may have some grain of truth, thinking about them and analyzing them is an exercise in futility. That time would be better spent working on some part of your game and being focused.

I could go on a long list of facts and examples that disproves each one of these self-limiting beliefs, but sometimes it seems that even attempting to do so doesn't even help.

For me the problems were being tall and not exactly trim. I had to model myself after other

big guys who could get chicks, but this was hard, since there are many fellow giants were in the same boat as me, and could not get any chicks. Eventually, I found some, and I put in work on my posture and body language. Not to mention just learning to concur shyness and not worry so much about my size. Seeing some big guys who were good with girls helped (thanks Seth Rogan), and eventually I was cured. Now I think it's kind of funny people complain about not being tall, because it was a huge curse for me, but I guess if you're the kind of guy who likes to look for a reason to fail, you will find one.

The most disturbing thing I've seen lately is a 5 foot 10 guy who's better looking than most of my other friends complaining about being short and that I had more natural advantages than him. This is just not the case. Everyone has natural gifts. And one person's broken mirror is another's Mona Lisa. There is no such thing as being universally attractive.

So here's a quick step by step plan for beating these ideas.

1- Accept that any idea is just an idea and it can be changed.

2- Start being open to new ideas and pay attention to ideas that disprove your old idea.

3- Work on a few parts of your game that are unrelated to yourself limiting belief. Try to forget about it for a while and just work on something else.

4- Work on being a positive person in general. Most self-limiting beliefs are symptoms of a larger problem, overall negativity. When you feel negative all the time, it manifests itself in strange ways. It has to take some form and shape in your self-talk. You may have "free floating anger" or "free floating negativity" which ends up coming out in the form of "I'm too old!"

The most important rule for success in any aspect of your life is confidence. Once you know you can do something, you should be unstoppable.

I'd like to thank everyone who sent feedback this year, both good and bad. I learned for everything sent my way. As lame and cliché as it is, if I was able to help just one guy or girl this year it was totally worth the time. If I entertained a few more along the way, even better.

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Montreal Monsters ravage Sudbury



Jon Danyliw
Arts & Entertainment Editor

Montreal-based prog-rockers The Gospel are one intimidating beast of a band.

They're a shuffled group of four ace-players whose technical wizardry is only equalled by their screw-ball creativity. On Mar. 16 and 17, The Gospel were temporary residents of Sudbury during a stopover on their tour – they wasted no time in making a significant impression on the city.

Beginning their visit with an intimate show at Sudbury's premier venue for music, The Townhouse Tavern, The Gospel took to the stage with the sort of self-destructive devotion to performance theatrics one might expect from professionals; the

Gospel are one of the most exciting bands to watch live I have ever seen, largely due to the feeling of tension produced by the threat of imminent danger to all active members at all times. During the climax to one of their songs, lead guitarist Sam Kirmayer and singer Gorge Grove – both, one imagines, feverish with the emotion of the music – broke out into an energetic play fight that send them both flying across the bar's small stage and culminated, unfortunately, in the destruction of Sam's guitar's headstock. A Gibson Les Paul Custom, the guitar was a valuable piece of equipment; its destruction was a testament to the band's incredibly vivacious live show. They were performing for a crowd of only about 25 people.

Wednesday brought the

Gospel to the smaller all-ages venue of Myths and Mirrors for a packed show punctuated by the same sort of energy as the night before, albeit no instruments were broken at this particular show. Both nights, the Gospel were able to sell significant amounts of merchandise; these sales, no doubt, were spurred by the lowering of prices on all items to five dollars in response to the band's general lack of funds.

The Gospel are a band to see, a truly promising group who, within the next few years, will have outgrown venues of the sort they now frequent. All of them are incredible musicians, though lead singer Gorge's Robert Plant-like voice is sure to be their greatest selling point. Expect them to be playing halls and auditoriums in the near future.

Cosmic Dave reviews: I Love Rock 'n' Roll



Die hard Joan Jett (vis-a-vis Runaways) fans would offer that this was her 'sellout record' – preferring (as always), obscure dusty record shop hackin' unattainables that they can proudly claim possession of. Well, up theirs cause this record rocks. This one came out when girls like Kim Deal and Kim Gordon still had acne. Released in 1981 amidst Blondie and Michael Jackson records, just as punk got its candy coating and disco died, it really came out of nowhere to be a #1 hit album. Combining 50's era rock & roll via the New York garage/punk scene with a sprinkling of pop that was distinctly of its narrow era – pretty much ONLY 1980/1981, 'I Love Rock & Roll' was one of the handful of hit records of the 80's that was actually GOOD. This was a time when the Clash, the Ramones – even the Sex Pistols were able to have a hit record or two – within a year or so it was all over, giving way to the 80's we all know and love/hate: Culture Club, Corey Hart, Wham, Lionel Richie... sugar coated shit. If this album came out today it would be all over college radio – it probably wouldn't be the hit it was in 1982 thanks to the current state of commercial pop radio – but you would know about it and you would love it.

The Learning Clinic: never be too quick to judge another

Robert Kirwan
Contributor

The late Malcolm Forbes, publisher of Forbes Magazine and known for his lavish lifestyle, was considered to be a very influential individual. When Malcolm Forbes spoke, everyone listened. And yet, despite all of his fame and power, there is one quote of his that truly expresses the secret of his great success. Forbes once said, "You can easily judge the character of others by how they treat those who can do nothing for them or to them."

The following story will demonstrate what he meant.

A lady in a faded gingham dress and her husband, dressed in a homespun threadbare suit, stepped off the train in Boston, and walked timidly without an appointment into the president of Harvard's outer office. The secretary could tell in a moment that such backwoods, country hicks had no business at Harvard and probably didn't even deserve to be in Cambridge..

"We want to see the president," the man said softly.

"He'll be busy all day," the secretary snapped.

"We'll wait," the lady replied.

For hours, the secretary ignored them, hoping that the couple would finally become discouraged and go away.

They didn't. And the secretary grew frustrated and

finally decided to disturb the president, even though it was a chore she always regretted to do. "Maybe if they just see you for a few minutes, they'll leave," she told him.

And he sighed in



exasperation and nodded. Someone of his importance obviously didn't have the time to spend with them, but he detested gingham dresses and homespun suits cluttering up his outer office. The president, stern-faced with dignity, strutted toward the couple. The lady told him, "We had a son that attended Harvard for one year. He loved Harvard. He was happy here. But about a year ago, he was accidentally killed. And my husband and I would like to erect a memorial to him, somewhere on campus."

The president wasn't touched, he was shocked. "Madam," he said gruffly. "We can't put up a statue for every person who attended Harvard and died. If we did, this place would look like a cemetery".

"Oh, no," the lady

explained quickly. "We don't want to erect a statue. We thought we would like to give a building to Harvard."

The president rolled his eyes. He glanced at the gingham dress and homespun suit, then

exclaimed, "A building! Do you have any earthly idea how much a building costs? We have over seven and a half million dollars in the physical plant at Harvard."

For a moment the lady was silent. The president was pleased. He could get rid of them now. And the lady turned to her husband and said quietly, "Is that all it costs to start a University? Why

don't we just start our own?"

Her husband nodded.

The president's face wilted in confusion and bewilderment. And Mr. and Mrs. Leland Stanford walked away, traveling to Palo Alto, California where they established the University that bears their name, a memorial to a son that Harvard no longer cared about.

As you go about your busy week, always be aware of how you treat strangers. Being nice to everyone is not just polite, it may even turn your life around.

Remember the words of Malcolm Forbes the next time you think someone is not worth of your time and attention. How do you treat others who can do nothing for you or to you?"

Have a good week!

Textbook: *Still required.*

Alarm clock: *Not so much.*



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The complete guide to Facebook friend requests

Patrick Suley
Contributor

The internet is a place without a definitive guide to etiquette. One common problem is determining if it's appropriate to send someone a friend request on Facebook. Fortunately, I've come up with a handy guide to help you figure out whether it would be acceptable to friend someone:

Scenario: You get assigned to a group project with a girl from your class. Appropriate to send a friend request? YES.

Scenario: You meet a cute girl at a party and chat it up for awhile. Appropriate to send a friend request? YES.

Scenario: You meet a cute girl at a party. You can't remember her name, but after checking the event page on Facebook you've narrowed down the possibilities to 12 different girls. Appropriate to send a friend request? YES, TO ALL.

Scenario: She has the same last name as you. Appropriate to send a friend request? YES.

Scenario: She has the same fake last name as you. Appropriate to send a friend request? YES.

Scenario: Her profile says she likes Sonic The Hedgehog. You have so much in common. She's also hot. Appropriate to send a friend request? YES.

Scenario: She went to the same middle school as you. You

were too scared to ever talk to her, but you are pretty sure that you were in love. Appropriate to send a friend request? YES.

Scenario: You sit near her in class sometimes. She takes good notes. Appropriate to send a friend request? YES.

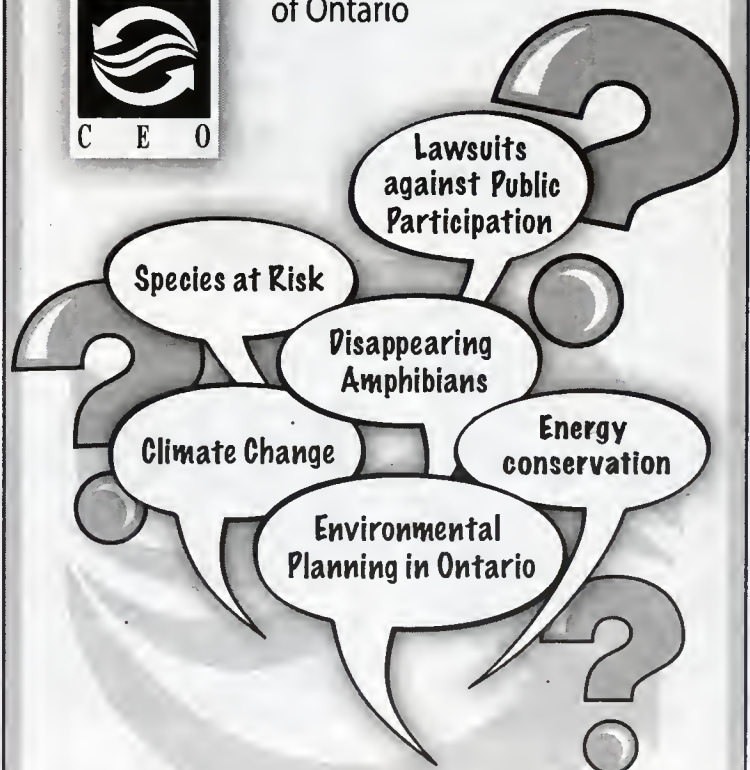
Scenario: She's the new weather girl for MCTV News. She was right 4 out of 7 days. Appropriate to send a friend request? YES.

Scenario: You found a sweatshirt with her name in it that she lost in The Great Hall. It smells good. Appropriate to send a friend request? YES.

Scenario: You are a girl and you like his articles in Lambda. Appropriate to send a friend request? HELL YES.



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Quantum Dots: Self regeneration, greasy roofs, and man's best friend

Mary Thompson
Contributor

It's getting to be that time of year again, exams are just around the corner and classes are winding down. Here at Quantum Dots we'll still keep you up to date on new discoveries in science, just in case you're looking for a study break.

Growing damaged tissue as good as new

If you thought regenerative healing was just a type of super power, think again. Flatworms and some amphibians have the ability to regenerate damaged tissue; even whole limbs in some cases—a skill many scientists have attempted to recreate. Turns out humans may naturally possess a mechanism for some self regeneration; it's just kept turned off by the gene p21. Lab mice lacking the p21 gene were able to regenerate surgically removed tissue; well enough that it looked as though the surgery hadn't happened. Switching off p21 allows adult cells to act similarly to pluripotent stem cells—cells that can generate many other cell types, thus allowing tissue regeneration. There is a slight catch, as rapidly dividing cells is the definition of cancer; switching off p21 could potentially lead to cells dividing uncontrollably. So far in the lab, mice lacking the p21 gene

have not shown any cancerous growth; the tissue regeneration is balanced by controlled cell death. Perhaps in the near future instead of burn victims getting a skin graft, they can just re-grow the damaged tissue.

Greener roofs, with grease?

The next thing for homeowners looking to green-up their house may be a reflective plastic roof coating which can switch between reflecting and absorbing solar light, made from waste cooking oil. The substance was developed by a team at United Environment and Energy LLC and can decrease roof temperatures between 50 and 80 percent in the summer and increase roof temperatures 80 percent in the winter. The researchers took used cooking oil from fast food restaurants and created a liquid polymer that forms a hard, non-flammable, non-toxic plastic when applied to any surface. The coating can even be tweaked to switch from reflection to absorption at specific temperatures, based on the roof's location. And not to worry, there's no danger neighbourhoods will start smelling like the food court at the local mall.

Secrets of man's best friend

Millions of people all over

the world own some kind of pet, and dogs make up the vast majority of furry house-mates. Dogs have been domesticated and a part of human society for thousands of years, yet scientists are still unravelling the history of our association with our favourite canine. A recent study compared the gene segments between grey wolves and 85 different breeds of dogs. The researchers, from the University of California, found several interesting facts about the genes of man's best friend. A gene coding for gregariousness as well as genes for memory which are thought to help dogs read human body language, and are thought to have allowed the ancestors of the modern dog become domesticated. The study also compared the genetics of different groups of dogs—herding dogs, sight hounds, or scent hounds—and found they are grouped together genetically, within specific lineages. According to this study, the most genetic similarity between wolves and dogs was found in the Middle East, indicating this is the origin of the domestication of wolves. This is the same part of the world where plants and several other animals were first domesticated, indicating a potential link between ancient dogs and the development of agriculture based societies.

Letter to the editor: Durston lecture lacking evidence and context

Matt Keevil
Contributor

On March 4th, I attended a lecture given on campus by Kirk Durston entitled “Is There a Conflict Between Religion and Science?” Apparently the answer to that question, from Mr. Durston's perspective, is “yes.” Durston is an intelligent design creationist who argues, among other things, that nearly all of modern evolutionary theory is fundamentally incorrect. Such a stance puts him in direct conflict with the vast majority of scientists and nearly all scientific institutions and organizations.

The arguments that Durston provides centre around his assertion that proteins contain too much information to have come into existence by chance (although of course evolutionary biology does not suggest that they did). It is impossible to fully evaluate his arguments because they were not fully explained, and because of time constraints and the general nature of his audience. This begs the question, why does he not present his arguments to scientific audiences by submitting a manuscript for publication in a peer reviewed journal? Why does he not at least make his complete ideas available online? And, no Mr. Durston, a YouTube video does not count. Why flash a bunch of equations and scientific papers up on the screen while making assertions to an untrained audience? Is he

trying to circumvent peer review and scientific scrutiny while donning the mantle of science?

Speaking of scientific papers and scrutiny, Durston claimed that a prediction of intelligent design proponents is a ubiquitous and irreversible net loss of functional information in all groups of organisms. He cited several papers to show that this occurs in bacteria, fruit flies, and humans. When I challenged him during the question period about the content of the paper about humans he conceded that he hadn't actually read it yet (I had and it did not say what he said it did) but he assured the audience that the fruit fly paper and the bacteria paper would support his assertions. The paper on fruit flies by Petrov and Hart was published in the *Journal of Biological and Molecular Evolution* in 2001. The title is High Rate of DNA Loss in the *Drosophila melanogaster* and *Drosophila virilis* Species Groups which sounds promising but actually refers only to non-functional regions of DNA and has nothing to say about the functional information that Durston kept referring to. Another study that he cited was Deletional bias and the evolution of bacterial genomes by Mjra and Moran in the journal *Trends in Genetics* (2001). This paper discusses deletions of regions of DNA that are non-functional or redundant. It tackles the question

of how bacterial genomes remain small despite the frequent addition of new functional and non functional DNA through gene duplication and horizontal gene transfer. Since Durston was so pressed for time, I assume that he presented only the strongest evidence available. Unfortunately for him, that evidence does not support his argument, although the titles sound like they might and there are a few sentences that he found useful when quoted out of context.

A frequent criticism of religion in general is that it limits itself to the ever shrinking gaps in scientific knowledge. Mr. Durston acknowledged this God-of-the-gaps argument but suggested that belief systems that try to explain all natural phenomena by invoking supernatural causes should be dismissed as superstition. He presented ancient Greek beliefs as an example, presumably because there were no Ancient Greeks in the room to be offended. Durston asserts that empirical claims made by any valid religion (he means his religion here) must stand up to scientific scrutiny. By putting this condition on religion he effectively paints it into a corner while simultaneously creating a conflict with science. I suspect that most religious and scientifically minded people (certainly not mutually exclusive categories) will find that he is not doing them any favours.

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Procrastination: tips and tricks



Patrick Suley
Contributor

When exam season and newspaper deadlines come about I find my mind goes in two different directions. The desire to do all that writing, and the desire to not be doing that writing at the moment. It's amazing what I'll let myself be distracted by or pretend is suddenly important and urgently needs attending to, simply so I can put off something I have to get done. Here's just a partial list of things I have thought, and ways I have dilly dallied in order to get around doing papers and, well, this very article. Follow along at home, or maybe try some of these out. That lab report can wait.

My eyes feel funny

I haven't cleaned the toilet in two days. Better get on that.

New York is playing Los Angeles right now. I better watch that. (Works for all sports)

Is pizza pie? It has crust. And there is that song. But no one leaves a pizza to cool on the windowsill.

I should walk around the neighbourhood and steal a pie cooling on a windowsill.

No one made a pie! Looks like I'm going to have to.

I wonder if Windows still comes with that pinball game. I'd better make sure I'm still good at it.

I should start writing, but that girl said she'd call in 30 minutes. I don't want to start just to have to stop.

Wow, that call was exhausting. I'd better relax and watch the entire first season of White Collar.

That's not to say I don't want all the riches and rewards of actually finishing my papers and articles, but how they will eventually get done is still a mystery at this point. Maybe I should see what the late penalties are per day for those papers. That way I can totally justify downloading Photoshop and fixing that bald spot in my beard right now.

Karate Club: it's about more than learning to count to ten in Japanese



Rachel Kent
Contributor

March 3rd, 2010

I joined the Karate club here at LU in the middle of September. After completing my first semester in Karate, and then my first rank exam, Sensei Charles asked if I would mind writing a brief essay for him on my first semester in Karate.

So, like the good karate student I thought I was I walked away from class planning out my essay. However, like the good university student I am, I procrastinated. In the middle of January I assured him that I would have it finished for him in the next week.

Well, it is now the first week of March and I'm just writing it now. Sorry Sensei, Karate has taught me a lot, but I still haven't learned not to procrastinate; I guess I need a few more months of training.

My time in Karate has generally passed quickly. There were of course some classes that seemed to drag on for hours; I suppose that's what I get for going to training on only a few hours of sleep, but such is the life of a university student. However, the past six months have gone by very quickly. For example, one day I woke up and realized that not only did I have two exams and four essays due that week; I also had my Karate rank exam at the end of the week. So, while everyone else in residence was getting ready to party and celebrate the end of another week, I was sitting in my room worrying if I would remember my Kata, or remember how to count to ten in

Japanese. I'm happy to say though; I did successfully make it through my first rank exam and am now the proud owner of a yellow belt.

Then the other day it happened all over again. I was relaxed, enjoying the fact that midterms were over and then it hit me, like one of Sensei's punches sometimes does; my first tournament is in three days. So now I'm sitting here, in the back of my intro to Psych class, worrying that not only will I forget my Kata but that I'll get the crap kicked out of me by someone from U of T. Sensei says if you want to be in a sport that doesn't hurt you shouldn't be in Karate. I enjoy Karate... but I still don't like getting hit.

March 8th, 2010

This was originally supposed to be an essay on my first semester in Karate. However, on the way back from our tournament in Toronto Sensei Charles turned around and said, "You know, it'd be great if someone could write a little something about the tournament."

So here's a quick rundown of the tournament. It started early, too early for university students, as we left at 6:30 from residence. After a rather uneventful ride down, punctuated by bouts of uncomfortable napping, we arrived at the U of T Phys Ed centre where we had to navigate what seemed like a maze of corridors to find the change room. Everyone from the club who competed brought home hardware. Spencer and myself, both yellow belts brought home gold in the Kumite division while Jamie, also a yellow belt, brought home the silver in Kumite. Carolyn,

a black belt and our coach for the day, brought home silver in Kumite and a fourth place finish in Kata. After the tournament we went out with the other schools to enjoy a well deserved dinner and a few drinks.

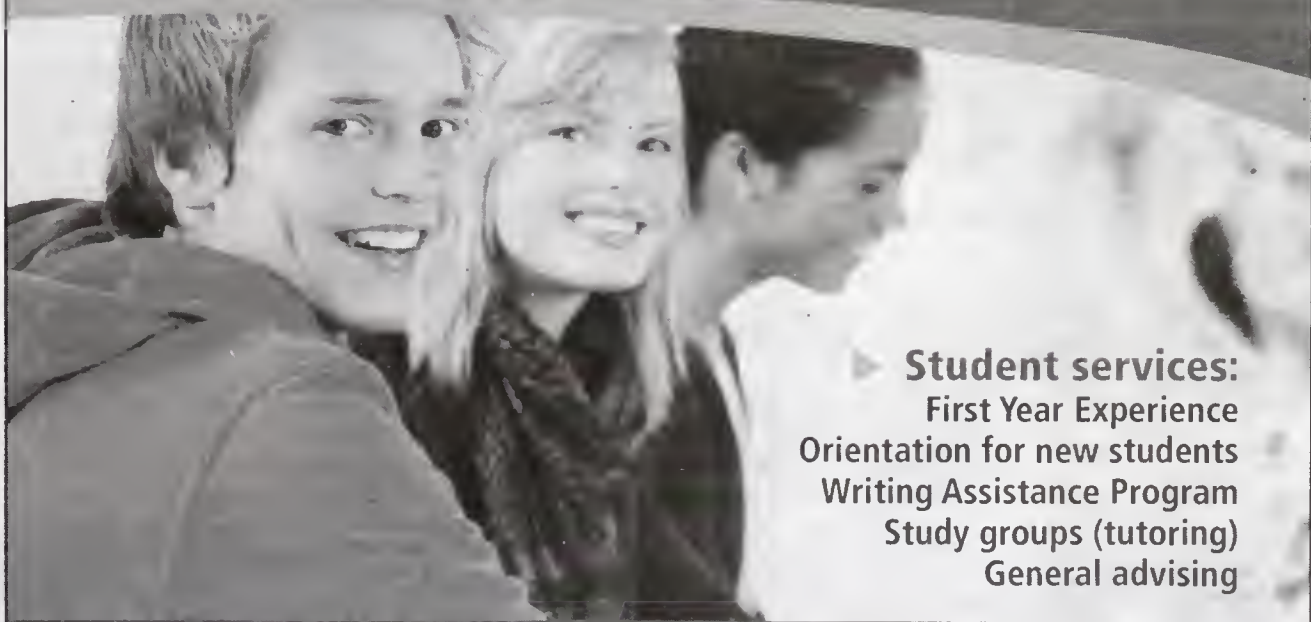
While waiting at the edge of the ring for my first round of Kumite the same fear came back to me that I experienced when I walked into the dojo for the first time. "What am I doing here?" I thought. "They all know what they're doing, I don't belong here."

But then the confidence of my last semester of training came back to me. Karate is not just a physical sport, it's a mental sport as well. Kumite is about having the physical technique and the mental strategy to defeat your opponent. In Karate, as I've learned, you don't need brute strength to take down your opponent; clean, fast attacks, and a strong focus on the task at hand are the winning combination.

The Karate club at Laurentian has been one of the most supportive places that I've found here on campus. Whether it is lending me a hand during training or offering to help me find a place to live next year the Karate club exemplifies the positive qualities of Laurentian that make me so proud to mention it while giving prospective students tours of Laurentian. The Karate club in the last semester has become a second home to me.

When I was awarded my yellow belt, Shihan Vokey told me that "I've learned a lot but I've got a long way to go". And was he ever right. However, I've now got the bowing and the belt tying down pat, so I think I'm doing alright.

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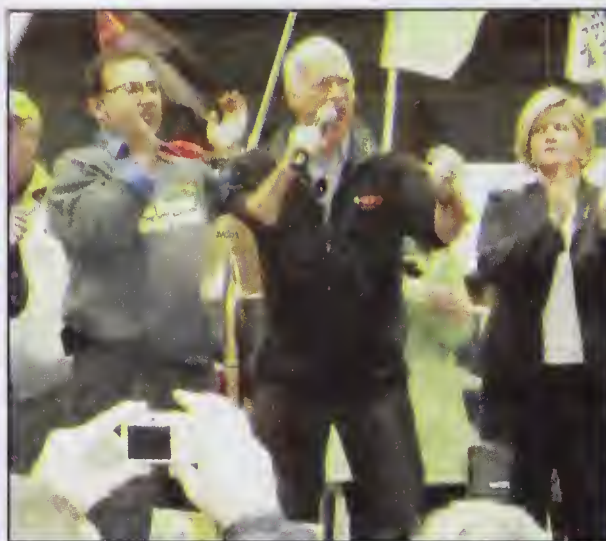
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